RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. Officer on Special Duty, Pune, is looking after the progress of the proposed new division.

(b) It will be developed in a phased manner.

(c) Budgetary provisions are being made as per the requirements based on phased planning.

Conversion of meter gauge sectors in Rajasthan

276. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to convert meter gauge rail lines from Rewari to Jaipur *via* Jhunjhunu Loharu to Churu, Churu to Sikar and Ringas to Rewari *via* Neem Ka Thana in Rajasthan into broad gauge;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, reasons therefor and the plans in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) A survey for conversion of these MG lines have already been completed and the survey report is under consideration.

Doubling laning of Konkan rail lines

277. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Konkan Railway which was meant to bring relief to the travellers of the Western India and few and very slow trains;

(b) if so, whether it is because of its being single track;

(c) whether it is also a fact that even Rajdhani Express is always late by a couple of hours; and

(d) whether Government have any plan to double this important line in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):
(a) All the trains which had been planned to be diverted *via* Konkan Railway have been so diverted. In addition, 3 trains which had not been originally planned have been introduced, of which 2 are express trains and one is a passenger train.

The average speed of Superfast Express trains over Konkan Railway is between 58 kmph and 75 kmph; for other mail/express trains between 49 and 59 kmph and for passenger trains it ranges between 39 and 59 kmph. These average commercial speeds are higher compared to the speeds for the same trains over adjoining Railways (except in respect of Rajdhani Express over Western Railway portion) and compare favourably with the rest of Indian Railways.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) It is not a fact that Rajdhani Express is always late by a couple of hours. In the month of December, out of 8 UP Rajdhani trains run (from Trivandrum Central towards Nizamuddin) only on one occasion the train was by over more than 2 hours late. In the down direction from (Nizamuddin towards Trivandrum Central) out of 9 trains run, only on 2 occasions, the train was delayed for more than 2 hours or more.

(d) The traffic on this line has not reached a level to justify doubling.

Improvement of train connections in Andhra Pradesh

278. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any plans to improve the train connections in Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantpur and Chitoor districts in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that though the districts are close to each other, there are no proper train connections between them;

(c) whether any study has been done to improve train connectivity